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Victory for Team G.FRO's Mandarino in Road Atlanta

October 5, 2007 - Team G.FRO pilot Lorenzo Mandarino carried momentum into the penultimate round of the 2007 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear and capitalized by coming home with the victory at Road Atlanta. Utilizing a daring late-race pass of then race-leader James Davison, Mandarino secured the win, capping off a stellar weekend aboard his #15 Team G.FRO/Newway Forming/Rossi Motorsport/GS-610 Brake Fluid Pro Formula Mazda.

"Boy, I really needed this one," said Mandarino, 20, who has led laps and scored a podium in the previous two rounds. "We qualified second, but the weather made the race a gamble for us. It rained in the morning, and it was mostly dry by race time though there were some clouds around, so choosing to go with the dry setup and dry tires was a calculated risk. The G.FRO team gave me a great car for the race and gave me some really good coaching over the radio and helped me make correct decisions about how to run the race. This is their win as much as mine and is a big step forward toward my plans for 2008, which I hope to finalize soon."

The weather did play a factor come race day as rain showered the course throughout the morning leading up to the 1:50pm ET start of the scheduled 30-lap race. However, the skies dried up as did the track and as the race time approached, the Team G.FRO crew scrambled to reverse their rain set-ups to compensate for the drying conditions.

Mandarino started the race from the outside pole while Team G.FRO teammate Chuck Hulse qualified his #69 Team G.FRO/Silicon Salvage/GS-610 Brake Fluid Pro Formula Mazda a solid 16th in both driver's first trip to the daunting track. At the start, a first corner accident brought out the first of three full-course cautions. Mandarino held his second position although Hulse was forced to pit with a mechanical problem which the G.FRO crew fixed but ultimately put him a lap down.

Meanwhile, Mandarino held a steady pace upon the re-start of the race, trying to pressure Davison for the lead while suffering pressure from behind. Mandarino did an excellent job fending off the pressure and eventually began to click off the fastest laps of the race in pursuit of Davison. A late race full-course caution resulted in the re-start that would change the race, which saw Mandarino dive to the inside of Davison into turn one, made it stick and pull away to victory.

"I'm so proud of this team," said Team G.FRO owner Geoff Fickling. "Everybody has worked so hard this year to win races and on a day like this we can feel really proud of our accomplishments. Lorenzo has proved the last few races that he's a force to be reckoned with and he absolutely deserves this win more than anybody."

Hulse made the most of a tedious race running one lap down and wound up finishing in the 16th place, equaling his starting position. While the result was frustrating for Hulse and the Team G.FRO team, expectations are high for the 54 year-old veteran of Yorba Linda, Calif. to rebound in the series finale in two weeks.

With the win, Team G.FRO heads into the final Star Mazda event at Mazda Raceway at Laguna Seca on October 18-20 sitting third in the Team Championship standings. Mandarino sits 7th in the Driver's points standings with 311 points, just six points out of 4th place.

Before the team heads to Monterey, Calif. for the Star Mazda finale, Team G.FRO will compete at the Las Vegas Motor Speedway for the Pacific F2000 Series finale, where Team G.FRO fields a three-car 'junior' team for drivers Jeff Westphal, Philip Metzger, and recently promoted Chuck Hulse.

Check out Mandarino's victory at Road Atlanta on Speed Channel Saturday October 13th at 12pm ET, 9am PT. For more on the Team G.FRO racing operation, visit www.teamgfro.net. For more on the series Team G.FRO compete, visit www.starmazda.com and www.pacificf2000.com.